

Church Union

News and Views

Organ of the Continuation Committee
of the
South India Joint Committee on Union

Vol. IV

MARCH 1934

No. 5

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CHURCH UNION

News and Views

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Vol. IV

MARCH 1934

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Editorial

Ourselves

In the closing paragraph of the Editorial in the January number of *Church Union—News and Views* there appeared a somewhat pessimistic statement as to the future of this paper, to the effect that probably after the March number publication would be suspended indefinitely. Since then, however, the Joint Committee has met and it has strongly endorsed the recommendation of the Continuation Committee that publication shall not be suspended but that with whatever modifications may be necessary *Church Union—News and Views* shall continue to exist. To complete the present Volume IV the May number will therefore be issued as usual. After that numbers will not be issued every two months, as hitherto, but quarterly, and in all probability a more rigid economy of space will have to be practised. *Church Union News* in any case will continue to be given with all necessary fulness: *Views* will need to be closely related to the subject in hand, if they are to find a place in our pages under the new conditions of our working.

Dr. J. J. Banninga, after attending the recent meeting of the Joint Committee, has left India for America on furlough and has consequently resigned his office as General Secretary of the Joint Committee and also

that of Managing Editor of *Church Union—News and Views*, which he has held from its beginning. This is not the place or time in which to refer to the great services Dr. Banninga has rendered to the cause of Church Union in South India by the energy and ability and devotion which he has brought to it; but his withdrawal from the editorship makes it not inappropriate to remind our readers of the value of this magazine in providing an authoritative and widely circulated record of what is being done in South India in the vital matter of Church Union. We do not profess that the magazine has been all we should have liked it to be; but the thought of its discontinuance at the present time cannot be entertained, and we are persuaded that the Joint Committee has acted wisely in insisting that it must go on.

Our Future and Finance

This insistence is based on the experience of the indispensable service the magazine has been rendering. But it also involves a very definite act of faith. As was stated in the January issue, the special funds that were available for the purpose of publication have been exhausted, and we see no immediate prospect of their renewal. We are therefore faced with the necessity of putting the magazine on a sounder financial basis. Four issues a year instead of six, and probably fewer pages in each issue will help in this direction. But we would also appeal to friends who have been receiving copies free of charge to become subscribers to the magazine: a considerable number of complimentary copies is sent out, and we are confident that among those who receive them there are some who will be happy to pay the annual subscription of Re. 1 in India or its equivalent in foreign currency (British postal orders for 1s. 6d. may conveniently be sent to the Publishers, the Christian Literature Society, Park Town, Madras). We would also urge our readers to try to secure fresh subscribers and thus help us to pay our way.

We have also received a very generous offer of Rs. 100 from a friend, conditional upon similar gifts being made up to a total of Rs. 500 to serve as a small guarantee fund for the work of the Joint Committee at this stage. Any contributions either in response to this challenge or in general towards the work of the Joint Committee may be sent to the Managing Editor at Nagpur, and will be very gratefully acknowledged by him.

Meeting of the Joint Committee

The twelfth session of the Joint Committee on Church Union was held in the Methodist Synod Hall, Royapettah, Madras, from Tuesday morning, February 13th, to Saturday morning, February 17th, 1934. The

Report is included in this number of *News and Views*: it is also being issued separately through the conveners of the three negotiating churches; and it is being printed as an appendix to the new edition of the *Proposed Scheme of Union* now passing through the Press, and embodying in it all the changes made at the Twelfth Session. This will be on sale at the C.L.S., Madras, at the same price as the 1933 edition, namely four annas.

In addition to the delegates from the three churches the Committee was glad to welcome to its sessions the special representative of the Methodist Conference, the Rev. Dr. W. F. Lofthouse, and to have the benefit of his expositions of the standpoint of the Conference on many of the points at issue.

The nature of the business done by the Joint Committee was largely determined by the references from the Episcopal Synod of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon, from the General Assembly of the S.I.U.C., and from the South India Provincial Synod of the Methodist Church. Some of these covered much the same ground as one another, and some dealt from different standpoints with the same parts of the Scheme: but even so it was impossible to do all that was on the Agenda, and a number of important questions have been referred to the Continuation Committee, which will probably be called sometime within the next few months. That Committee is to prepare full drafts in readiness for the next meeting of the Joint Committee. Among these questions are to be noted the proposals brought forward on behalf of the Methodist Church and heartily welcomed by the Committee, for such alterations in various chapters of the Constitution as will make more plain the evangelistic duty of the church and of all its ministers and members, and similar proposals designed to emphasise the spiritual aspects of membership in the church by suitable additions in Chapter III. The Committee was also asked to give further consideration to the question of the power of the Synod to make the use of the Creeds obligatory in any services (see Governing Principles, sect. 11). A draft for the chapter on the Marriage Law of the Church, the chapter (VI) on the Ministry of the Laity, the question of assistant bishops, the scheme of dioceses and other initial arrangements, and the financial aspects of the union, were also referred to the Continuation Committee.

Some Outstanding Resolutions

It was recognised that many difficult questions awaited settlement in this session of the Joint Committee, and once more it is with thankfulness to Almighty God that we report that every discussion was marked by eagerness on the part of each group to understand and to give full weight to the convictions of the others. Many misunderstandings were cleared

away by the frank statements that were made: no one displayed any desire for a merely dialectic victory in discussion or for the victory of a merely sectional interest. The Committee found its unity now as on previous occasions in the determination to learn and to obey the will of God, and we are profoundly thankful for fresh tokens of the Divine presence and guidance. This does not mean that discussion was not vigorous and prolonged, nor does it mean that every one was entirely satisfied with all the Resolutions passed; but progress towards fuller understanding and a more adequate statement of what the Joint Committee means was definitely made.

In the first and fifth Resolutions an attempt has been made to raise the whole question of the mutual recognition of the ministries of the three uniting churches before union above the level on which it has too often been discussed: the terms about which much controversy has raged have been deliberately avoided, and in the frank and full recognition that the grace of God has been abundantly manifested in each of the ministries and that they have been spiritually efficacious, and that their work has been abundantly owned of God, the things which all agree are the really important things are duly emphasised. When it is agreed that God has thus sealed each ministry, it is surely beside the mark to be very zealous about securing formal expressions of approval or recognition from men. Unless all such problems are solved on the levels of their relation to God there can be no end to the hindrances that human weakness will present to the achievement of union.

In the third Resolution, on the historic episcopate, what has been implicit in the scheme throughout has been made explicit, and it is hoped that this fuller statement with regard to the differing views and beliefs about episcopacy that are held within the uniting churches will clear the issue and will make explanatory foot-notes unnecessary. It is obvious from this statement that a task of very great difficulty is being attempted; but the Joint Committee is persuaded that it is not impossible. The resolution reads as follows:—

'The uniting Churches accept the historic episcopate in a constitutional form as part of their basis of union. There are within the uniting Churches differing views and beliefs about episcopacy, which have been frankly recognised throughout the negotiations. For example, some regard episcopacy merely as a form of church government which has persisted in the Church through the centuries and may as such be called historic, and which at the present time is expedient for the Church in South India. Others believe that episcopacy is of divine appointment, and that episcopal ordination is an essential guarantee of the sacraments of the Church. Some, again, hold various views intermediate between these two. The acceptance of episcopacy by the uniting Churches, thus differing in their views and beliefs concerning it and concerning orders of the ministry, is not to be taken as committing the united Church to the acceptance of any particular interpretation of episcopacy, and no such particular inter-

pretation shall be demanded from any minister or member of the united Church'.

Resolution No. 7 is also of great importance, dealing with the much-debated Pledge and giving the judgement of the Joint Committee as to its meaning. It reads as follows:—

'That in view of questions which have arisen, the Joint Committee thinks it right to state what is in its judgement the meaning of the provisions generally referred to as the Pledge.

This pledge applies to the period following the inauguration of the union when the members of the three Churches, then united in one Church, will be growing together; and the uniting Churches pledge themselves to do all in their power to assist the united Church in its advance towards complete spiritual unity, and towards the time when all the members of the united Church will be willing and able to receive communion equally in all its churches.

Further they pledge themselves that because of the union no congregation shall be deprived of forms of worship or a ministry to which it has been accustomed, but every honest endeavour will be made by the authorities of the united Church that neither forms of worship or ritual, nor a ministry, to which they have not been accustomed or to which they conscientiously object, shall be imposed upon any congregation. But the Committee does not understand the pledge to imply that the fact that a minister has previously been a minister of either an episcopal or a non-episcopal Church will in itself debar him from appointment to or working in any congregation of the united Church where that congregation desires it.

Further, that the intention of the uniting Churches is that there shall be no infringement of the liberty of conscience which every worshipper and every minister now enjoys, and that in the united Church all alike shall be free to worship and to teach according to their conscience, only so that nothing be done to break the fundamental unity of the Church.

The Joint Committee wishes further to urge upon the negotiating Churches that while the purpose for which these provisions have been inserted in the Basis of Union will not be fulfilled unless the real scope and effect of the pledge be understood by all parties, that purpose will be entirely defeated if detailed interpretations of the pledge, and precise statements of its application to particular future and hypothetical cases, are demanded; and it appeals to the negotiating Churches to act in this matter in the full spirit of the declaration that freedom of opinion on debatable matters and mutual respect for differences of opinion and practice can be safeguarded, not by the framing of detailed regulations, but by assurances given and received in a spirit of confidence and love.'

Resolution 10 should be carefully studied: it refers to the Consecration of Bishops in the United Church, and makes an alteration in the proposed procedure, by which, as the rule of the Church, the two presbyters, who shall present to the bishops the person to be consecrated, shall join with the bishops in the laying on of hands—with the proviso that if the Diocesan Council concerned specially so determine, hands shall be laid on by the bishops only. In the previous edition of the Scheme the

rule was that the bishops should lay on hands, presbyters being associated with them only if the diocese concerned so desired.

Resolution 24 contains an exposition of what is meant by 'voting by houses', in view of the misunderstandings that exist on the matter, and with that exposition the question is referred again to the three Churches for their opinion. The other Resolutions are all significant and suggest changes which it is hoped will embody more of what is best in the practice of the uniting Churches than the previous version. They are related to recommendations that have come from one or other of the Churches.

Day of Thanksgiving and Intercession in connection with Church Union

The Joint Committee resolved that Sunday, August 26th, be appointed as a special day for thanksgiving and intercession in connection with Church Union, and that Churches be requested to give a special collection on that day for the work of union in South India. Suitable literature is to be prepared and circulated; but this preliminary announcement is made so as to avoid as far as possible the clashing of this with any other arrangements for August 26th.

World Conference on Faith and Order

The Continuation Committee of the World Conference on Faith and Order—commonly known as the Lausanne Continuation Committee—has for the past ten years regarded the eight days before Whitsunday as a special time for prayer on behalf of the movement. We commend to our readers the suggestions that have come from the General Secretary, Canon L. Hodgson of Winchester, towards the use of that time this year.

- (1) That on Sunday, May 13th, clergy and ministers call the attention of their congregations to the duty of praying for the Reunion of Christendom.
- (2) That they then ask the members of their congregations to make earnest intercession for this object in their daily prayers during the coming week.
- (3) That at some time during the week a service of Intercession for the Reunion of Christendom be held, arranged as best fits the local circumstances in each place.

REPORT OF THE TWELFTH SESSION OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON CHURCH UNION

(Madras, February 13th to 17th, 1934.)

The Joint Committee on Church Union met at the Methodist Synod Hall, Royapettah, Madras, from Tuesday morning, February 13th, to Saturday morning, February 17th, 1934.

The following were present :—

Church of India

The Rt. Rev. the Bishop of Dornakal—(<i>Convener</i>).	Rev. Canon B.H.P. Fisher.
The Rt. Rev. the Bishop of Madras.	Rev. Dr. A. J. Appasamy.
The Rt. Rev. the Bishop of Tinnevely.	The Ven. P. B. Emmet.
The Rt. Rev. the Bishop of Nasik.	Rev. W. E. Evans.
The Ven. F. L. Beven.	„ J. B. Gnanaolivu.
	„ G. N. L. Hall.
	„ J. Kuriyan.
	„ J. C. Winslow.
	Mr. B. L. Rallia Ram.

South India United Church

Rev. Dr. J. H. Maclean—(<i>Convener</i>).	Rev. A. Streckeisen.
Rev. Dr. J. J. Banninga.	„ H. Sumitra.
„ J. A. Jacob.	„ L. J. Thomas.
„ Meshach Peter.	Mr. J. V. Chelliah.
„ George Parker.	„ G. V. Job.
„ R. Robertson.	„ C. J. Lucas.
„ B. Samuel.	„ M. J. Sargunam.
	„ T. A. Thomas.

Methodist Church

Rev. H. Gulliford—(<i>Convener</i>).	Rev. Paul Rangaramanujam.
Rev. E. L. Ananta Rao.	„ W. A. Sandford.
„ J. G. Bennett.	„ W. H. Spencer.
„ A. O. Brown.	„ W. E. Tomlinson.
„ P. Gurushanta.	Mr. S. Gnanapragasam.
„ J. S. M. Hooper.	„ W. Jivaratnam.
„ C. W. Posnett.	„ P. K. Mon Singh.
	„ W. H. Warren.

Visitors.—The following visitors were introduced, and it was resolved that they be given the freedom of the floor :—

Rev. Dr. W. F. Lofthouse, Rev. W. E. H. Organe.

The following appointments were made :—

Chairman : Rev. H. Gulliford.

Secretary : „ J. S. M. Hooper.

Minute Secretaries : The Bishop of Tinnevely.
Mr. C. J. Lucas.

Business Committee : The Bishop of Dornakal.
Rev. H. Gulliford.

„ Dr. J. H. Maclean.

„ J. S. M. Hooper.

Drafting Committee : The Bishop of Tinnevely.

Rev. Dr. J. H. Maclean.

„ J. S. M. Hooper.

Devotional Meetings.—All the meetings of the session were opened and closed with prayer, and other devotional periods were held daily, conducted by Rev. Dr. J. J. Banninga, Rev. Canon B. H. P. Fisher, Rev. W. H. Spencer, Rev. Dr. A. J. Appasamy, and Rev. Meshach Peter.

The delegates attended the celebration of Holy Communion at the Cathedral on Wednesday, February 14th; and on Friday, February 16th, the Holy Communion was celebrated at the Methodist Synod Hall by Rev. Dr. W. F. Lofthouse, assisted by Rev. J. A. Jacob.

ALTERATIONS IN THE BASIS OF UNION AND THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED CHURCH.

(References given below are to the 1933 edition of the Proposed Scheme of Union.)

Resolutions of the General Assembly of the South India United Church, of the South India Provincial Synod of the Methodist Church, and of the Episcopal Synod and the General Council Standing Committee of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon were reported by the conveners of the respective delegations and discussed by the Committee, together with matters of which consideration had been deferred at the previous session of the Committee, and the following resolutions were adopted *nem. con.* :—

1. *Basis of Union, sect. 1 (p. 2)*—That the following be inserted after the first sentence on page 2 (line 4) :—

‘The uniting Churches gratefully acknowledge the grace of God abundantly manifested in each other’s ministries and the spiritual efficacy of these ministries in the work of the Kingdom of God, and they thank God for the blessings He has given to the world through them. They confidently expect that He will bestow even greater blessings

when these ministries, hitherto separate, are working together in one fellowship. For the united Church will be formed. . .'

(See also no. 5 below.)

2. *Basis of Union, sect. 3, notes (p. 4)*—That the following be added at the end of Note (ii):—

'But no teacher of the united Church will be justified in teaching anything inconsistent with the formularies of that Church on the plea that it is in his opinion contained or implied in any such confession.'

(See also no. 22 below.)

3. *Basis of Union, sect. 9 (p. 7)*—

(a) That the following be substituted for the first paragraph:—

'The uniting Churches accept the historic episcopate in a constitutional form as part of their basis of union. There are within the uniting Churches differing views and beliefs about episcopacy, which have been frankly recognised throughout the negotiations. For example, some regard episcopacy merely as a form of church government which has persisted in the Church through the centuries and may as such be called historic, and which at the present time is expedient for the Church in South India. Others believe that episcopacy is of divine appointment, and that episcopal ordination is an essential guarantee of the sacraments of the Church. Some, again, hold various views intermediate between these two. The acceptance of episcopacy by the uniting Churches, thus differing in their views and beliefs concerning it and concerning orders of the ministry, is not to be taken as committing the united Church to the acceptance of any particular interpretation of episcopacy, and no such particular interpretation shall be demanded from any minister or member of the united Church.'

The Joint Committee suggests that if this be accepted, the S.I.U.C. may not find it necessary to append their present note on the word 'historic'.

(b) That sub-section (iii), lines 3ff. read as follows :—

‘it being understood that, as stated above, no particular interpretation of the historic episcopate as that is accepted in the united Church is thereby implied or shall be demanded from any minister or member thereof.’

(c) That the following be added at the end of sub-section (iv), a comma being substituted for the full stop :—

‘and the fact that other Churches do not follow the rule of episcopal ordination shall not in itself preclude the united Church from holding relations of communion and fellowship with them.’

(See also no. 9 below.)

4. *Basis of Union, sect. 10, note (p. 8)*—That, as desired by the Church of India, the note take the following form :—

‘The Church of India, Burma and Ceylon, while it does not wish to insist on the acceptance of Confirmation in the united Church as a prerequisite term of union, desires most earnestly to commend the use of it, not primarily as a service of admission to Holy Communion, but as a rite which from the time of the Apostles has been considered naturally to follow Holy Baptism, and through which this Church believes that a special gift of the Holy Spirit is bestowed. This desire is further strengthened by experience of the benefits which individual members of the Church have received through it and of the enrichment which it brings to the pastoral ministry of the bishop.’

5. *Basis of Union, sect. 11 (p. 8)*—That the section begin as follows :—

‘Acknowledging that the grace of God has been clearly manifested in all the ministries of the uniting Churches in their separation, and recognising that the work of those ministries has been abundantly owned of God, the uniting Churches agree that all the ministers working in those Churches in the area of the union at the time of the inauguration of the union shall be accepted as con-

stituting the initial ministry of the united Church.
They therefore agree

(i) . . .

(See also no. 1 above.)

6. *Basis of Union, sect. 16, first and second paras. (p. 14)*—

That with reference to the suggestion from the Church of India, the Committee does not think that it would be advisable to omit the words 'and expectation' in line 2.

That the following be substituted for lines 10 to 14 of the second para :—

'After this period of thirty years, the united Church must determine for itself whether it will continue to make any exceptions to the rule that its ministry is an episcopally ordained ministry, and generally under what conditions it will receive ministers from other Churches into its ministry. It is trusted that in its consideration of these matters it will give full weight. . .'

(See also no. 11 below.)

7. *Basis of Union, sect. 16, third to fifth paras (pp. 14, 15)*—

That in view of questions which have arisen, the Joint Committee thinks it right to state what is in its judgement the meaning of the provisions generally referred to as the Pledge.

This pledge applies to the period following the inauguration of the union when the members of the three Churches, then united in one Church, will be growing together; and the uniting Churches pledge themselves to do all in their power to assist the united Church in its advance towards complete spiritual unity, and towards the time when all the members of the united Church will be willing and able to receive communion equally in all its churches.

Further, they pledge themselves that because of the union no congregation shall be deprived of forms of worship or a ministry to which it has been accustomed, but every honest endeavour will be made by the authorities of the united Church that neither forms of worship or ritual, nor a ministry, to which they have not been accustomed or to which they conscientiously object, shall be imposed upon any congregation. But the Committee does not understand the pledge to imply that the fact that a minister has previously been a minister of either an episcopal or a non-episcopal Church will in itself debar him from appointment to or working in any congregation of the united Church where that congregation desires it.

Further, the intention of the uniting Churches is that there shall be no infringement of the liberty of conscience which every worshipper and every minister now enjoys, and that in the united Church all alike shall be free to worship and to teach according to their conscience, only so that nothing be done to break the fundamental unity of the Church.

The Joint Committee wishes further to urge upon the negotiating Churches that while the purpose for which these provisions have been inserted in the Basis of Union will not be fulfilled unless the real scope and effect of the pledge be understood by all parties, that purpose will be entirely defeated if detailed interpretations of the pledge, and precise statements of its application to particular future and hypothetical cases, are demanded; and it appeals to the negotiating Churches to act in this matter in the full spirit of the declaration that freedom of opinion on debatable matters and mutual respect for differences of opinion and practice can be safeguarded, not by the framing of detailed regulations, but by assurances given and received in a spirit of confidence and love.

8. *Governing Principles, sect. 4 (p. 22)*—

(a) That Note (i) to the section be added to the section itself as a fourth paragraph.

(b) That Note (ii), with an added sentence, be transferred to chapter V, rule 5 (see no. 22 below).

9. *Governing Principles, sect. 10 (pp. 25, 26)*—

(a) That the following be substituted for the first paragraph:—

‘The Church of South India accepts and will maintain the historic episcopate in a constitutional form. But this acceptance does not commit it to any particular interpretation of episcopacy or to any particular view or belief concerning orders of the ministry, and it will not require the acceptance of any such particular interpretation or view as a necessary qualification for its ministry.’

(b) That in sub-section (iii), lines 2ff, the sub-section read as follows:—

‘it being understood that, as stated above, no particular interpretation of the historic episcopate as that is accepted in the Church of South India is thereby implied or shall be demanded from any minister or member of the Church.’

(c) That at the end of the section, after the words 'any other form of the ministry', a comma be substituted for the full stop, and the following be added :—

'and the fact that other Churches do not follow the rule of episcopal ordination will not in itself preclude it from holding relations of communion and fellowship with them.'

(See also no. 3 above.)

10. *Governing Principles, sect. 10 (p. 26)—Consecration of bishops—*

That, with reference to the resolutions of the three Churches with regard to the provisions for the consecration of bishops in the united Church, the Joint Committee recognises that it is undesirable to provide that there should be two different uses in this important matter within the united Church. The Committee also recognises, however, that there are very great difficulties in a provision either that presbyters shall always share in the laying on of hands in the consecration of a bishop, or that they shall never do so. In either of these cases it seems inevitable that there should be some departure from a principle to which the Committee has always adhered, and which it believes to be most important for the attainment of union, viz., that while the uniting Churches must agree in what is to be done in any particular matter in the united Church, they should not thereby be made to feel that they are committed to one or another of differing views on subjects such as the ministry.

The Committee therefore refers the following proposals to the three Churches, and inserts them in the Scheme, as proposals by which, in its judgement, there will be the least possible departure from the principle stated above, and respectfully requests that they should be considered in this light :—

(a) That there be no alteration in the present draft of the Basis of Union, section 9 (iv), apart from the addition on a different subject made in resolution 3 (c) above.

(b) That sub-section (iv) of Governing Principles, sect. 10 be closed after line 5 ('... at least of three bishops'), and the following be substituted for the remainder of the sub-section, in two separated paragraphs :—

'The Church of South India believes that in all ordinations and consecrations the true Ordainer and Consecrator is God, who, in response to the prayers of His Church, and through the words and acts of its representatives, commissions and empowers for the office and work to which they are called the persons whom it has selected.'

'In the service of consecration of a bishop in the Church of South India, the person to be consecrated shall be solemnly presented to the bishops who are taking part in the consecration by two presbyters of the diocese to which he is to be appointed, and these two presbyters shall join with the bishops in the laying on of hands. If, however, the Diocesan Council concerned specially so determine, hands shall be laid on by the bishops only.'

(c) That Chapter IV, Rule 24 (p. 44) be correspondingly amended.

(See no. 18 below.)

11. *Governing Principles, sect. 20, last para (p. 34)*—That the following be substituted for the first sentence:—

'After this period of thirty years, the Church of South India will determine whether there shall continue to be any exceptions to the rule that its ministry is an episcopally ordained ministry, and generally under what conditions it will receive ministers from other Churches into its ministry.'

(See also no. 6 above.)

12. *Chapter III (pp. 34-36)*—That the Committee welcomes the proposals of the Methodist Church for additions in Chapter III to emphasise the spiritual aspects of membership of the Church, and refers them to the Continuation Committee for consideration and report at the next session of the Joint Committee.

13. *Chapter IV, Rule 4 (p. 38)*—That the words after 'Chapter V of this Constitution' be deleted.

(See also no. 21 below)

14. *Chapter IV, Rule 5 (p. 38)*—That the following be substituted for the last sentence:—

'The stationing of the ministers shall also be carried out by the bishop of the diocese together with the diocesan committees or other bodies prescribed by the rules of the diocese.'

15. *Chapter IV, Rule 11 (pp. 39, 40)*—That the Rule read as follows:—

'The bishop of a diocese shall remain bishop of that diocese until he resign, or accept . . . the duties of his office, or until he die.'

16. *Chapter IV, Rules 11 and 12 (pp. 39, 40)*—On suggestions made by the Methodist Church that some procedure should be provided for the transfer of a bishop from one diocese to another where this might be considered desirable, and whereby the Moderator might be approached by members of a Diocesan Council on the question of the compulsory resignation or the transfer of a bishop, the Joint Committee was of opinion that such cases would in practice be best dealt with by unofficial action, and that constitutional provision to deal with them was not necessary or advisable.

17. *Chapter IV, Rule 13 (p. 41)*—That in the last line of the Rule, for the words, 'his power of administering ordination or confirmation', be substituted the words, 'his functions with respect to ordination and confirmation'.

18. *Chapter IV, Rule 24 (p. 44)*—That for the latter part of the Rule, from line 5 to the end, there be substituted the following:—

' . . . these to include at least (i) the solemn presentation of the person to be consecrated to the bishops who are taking part in the consecration by two presbyters of the diocese to which he is to be appointed; (ii) a consecratory prayer, asking that the person to be consecrated may receive the gift of God's Holy Spirit for the office and work of a bishop in His Church; and (iii) the laying on of hands by the bishops (who shall be at least three in number) and by the two presbyters referred to above, with words accompanying. If, however, the Diocesan Council concerned specially so determine, hands shall be laid on by the bishops only. The consecration of a bishop shall normally take place in the course of a Communion service.'

(See also no. 10 above.)

19. *Chapter V, Rule 1 (p. 45)*—That the following be substituted for the Rule:—

'1. It is the special duty of a presbyter—

'(1) To watch over the flock committed to him; to visit the congregation and especially the sick and the erring; to teach, to warn, to rebuke and encourage; and to maintain the doctrine and discipline of the Church in which he is a minister with all fidelity:

'(2) To be a leader in the work of preaching the Word in the congregation committed to him, and in building up all its members in their most

holy faith; to strive to bring sinners to repentance and forgiveness both by public and private exercise of his ministry; to encourage and give full scope for the exercise by Church members of their various ministries in the Church; and to forward all efforts directed to the establishment of righteousness and the removal of wrong in the community :

‘(3) To lead the worship and administer the Holy Communion in the congregation, and to conduct the other sacred services of the Church :

‘(4) To teach and baptise; to instruct the young and prepare candidates for confirmation and for admission to communicant membership, and to admit approved candidates to communicate membership :

‘(5) To use every opportunity to preach the Gospel to non-Christians and to bring men to the obedience of the faith :

‘(6) To these ends, to be diligent in private study and prayer.’

20. *Chapter V, new Rule (p. 46)*—That a new Rule as follows be inserted before present Rule 3, that Rule and the following Rules being renumbered as 4 onwards :—

‘3. Men will be ordained as presbyters in the Church of South India who offer themselves for the ministry because they are conscious of a call from God to that work, who are recognised by the Church as giving evidence of that call through their possession of gifts appropriate to their calling, and who have been given due training for the work of the ministry.’

21. *Chapter V, Rule 3 (p. 46)*—

(a) That the following be substituted for the first two lines of the Rule :—

‘Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, and in accordance with such standards as shall be determined and such general rules as shall be laid down by the Synod. . .’

(b) That the following sentence be added at the end of the first paragraph :—

‘Rules with regard to these matters made by Diocesan Councils shall be submitted to the

Synod to ensure that they are in accordance with the general rules laid down, whether in this Constitution or by the Synod, and with the principles and standards accepted by the Church.'

22. *Chapter V, Rule 5 (p. 47)*—That the following (at present a note to Governing Principles, sect. 4, p. 22) be added as a third paragraph in this Rule :—

'The act of union does not debar any teacher of the Church of South India from using for the instruction of the faithful any confession of faith which had been employed in any of the uniting Churches before the union, though such confession be not included in the doctrinal standards of the Church of South India. But no teacher of the Church is justified in teaching anything inconsistent with the formularies of the Church on the plea that it is in his opinion contained or implied in any such confession.'

23. *Chapter X, Rule 4 (pp. 61, 62)*—That the following be substituted for the second paragraph of the Rule :—

'In the ordinary congregational worship of any congregation, no authority of the Church of South India shall forbid the use of the Creeds or impose it against the will of the congregation. But in services in which the whole Church is concerned, as, for instance, consecrations or ordinations, the Synod may in accordance with the Governing Principles of the Church issue regulations on the matter.'

In this connection, the Committee agreed, on the request of a member, that the Continuation Committee should consider further the question of the power of the Synod to make the use of the Creeds obligatory in any services (see Governing Principles, sect. 11).

24. '*Voting by Houses*'—That since the Joint Committee believes that there are in certain quarters misunderstandings as to the nature and practical working of the system known as 'Voting by Houses', it refers the matter again to the three Churches for their opinion, and submits the following statement showing its method of working and effects if it were adopted for the Synod of the united Church :—

If this system were adopted for the Synod of the united Church, the provisions in the present draft of Chapter IX of the Constitution that the bishops sitting separately must approve

the form of any proposition concerning the faith and order of the Church, etc., which is to be voted on, and may refuse to submit such a proposition in any form to the Synod, would be omitted entirely, and the following rules on voting and the passing of resolutions in the Synod would take the place of Rules 21 to 23 (pp. 57, 58):—

‘21. Except as stated below, and in the cases when a greater majority than an ordinary majority is required for the passing of any resolution by this Constitution or by standing order of the Synod, all resolutions of the Synod shall be passed by an ordinary majority of all members of the Synod present and voting together.

‘But when any proposition is brought before the Synod which directly concerns

‘(a) the faith and doctrine of the Church,

‘(b) the conditions of membership in the Church, and the rules which govern excommunication from the Church,

‘(c) the functions of the ordained ministers of the Church,

or ‘(d) the worship of the Church, and any forms of worship proposed for general use in the Church,

any ten members of the Synod may before the vote is taken thereon demand that votes be taken separately of the lay members, of the presbyters, and of the bishops. If this demand is made, the votes shall so be taken, and the proposition shall be deemed to be accepted by the Synod only when it receives a majority of votes in each of these three groups.

‘In cases when a greater majority than an ordinary majority is required for the passing of any resolution (e.g., for alterations in the Constitution, *see* Chapter XIV), and it is demanded that votes be taken separately as above, the proposition must receive both the required majority (two-thirds or three-quarters, as the case may be) in the whole Synod voting together, and also an ordinary majority in each of the three groups.

‘22. In the last rule, in the term “proposition” shall be included any proposed enactment, formal statement, or resolution of the Synod, and any forms of public worship to be set forth by the Synod.’

Consequential.—In Chapter XIV, omit all reference to ‘the special procedure laid down in Rules 21 to 23 of Chapter IX’.

BUSINESS REFERRED TO THE CONTINUATION COMMITTEE.

(1) *Evangelistic Emphasis*.—Proposals were brought forward on behalf of the Methodist Church for alterations in various chapters of the Constitution designed to strengthen the emphasis on the evangelistic duty of the Church and of all its ministers and members. These were welcomed by the Committee, and referred to the Continuation Committee to

prepare full drafts for the next session of the Joint Committee.

(2) *Marriage Law*.—A draft for the chapter on The Marriage Law of the Church was brought forward by the sub-committee that had been appointed at the last session. Time permitting only a brief discussion of it, it was referred to the Continuation Committee.

(3) In addition to these, and to the matters referred to the Continuation Committee in Resolutions 12 and 23 above, the subjects postponed at the last session of the Committee, including in particular Chapter VI on The Ministry of the Laity, the question of assistant bishops, the scheme of dioceses and other initial arrangements, and the financial aspects of the union, were referred to the Continuation Committee.

REPORT OF THE CONTINUATION COMMITTEE.

The report of the Continuation Committee was read and accepted. In particular,

- (i) It was noted that the funds of the Joint Committee were now much reduced, and only a small balance was in hand. It was agreed that an appeal be made for donations, both from individuals and from the Churches.
 - (ii) It was resolved to continue the publication of *Church Union—News and Views* in a smaller size and at a reduced cost, as a quarterly after July, 1934; that the managing editor be the Rev. J. S. M. Hooper, with the Bishop of Madras, Rev. Dr. J. H. Maclean, and Rev. H. Gulliford also on the Editorial Board.
 - (iii) It was resolved that the Secretary be authorised in consultation with the three Conveners to arrange for the holding of Conferences and Retreats and the printing of further publications as funds for these purposes may be available.
 - (iv) It was resolved that Sunday, August 26th, be appointed as a special day for thanksgiving and intercession in connection with Church Union, and that the Secretary arrange for the preparation and circulation of the appropriate literature; also that churches be requested to give a special collection on that day for the work of union in South India.
 - (v) It was resolved that the present report of the Joint Committee be published as a pamphlet (to be obtainable from the three Conveners), and also appended to the new edition of the Scheme about to be published, in which should be incorporated the alterations in the Scheme accepted by the Joint Committee.
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Articles

The Quadrilaterals of Lambeth and of Tradition

The Scheme of Union before us now is a scheme so far complete that in its principles at any rate it is not likely to be altered. It can therefore be considered as a whole. Hitherto, and for the most part, attention has been given to details, not, of course, forgetting the principles underlying those details; but now in a way not possible before, it is presented to the churches as a scheme, and as a scheme it is open for consideration. It is a scheme of Union, and by that is usually understood a union between episcopal and non-episcopal Churches. That is not the whole truth however. It is also a union between a Church that emphasises the traditional with Churches which do not place the emphasis there in the same way and this runs all through the scheme and does not affect one part only. It is true that all Churches recognise the value of tradition, but not all Churches give the same meaning and authority to tradition, and it is well that we should recognise some of the implications underlying this difference.

That the union involved in the scheme carries with it implications regarding tradition may be seen by a comparison between the four points which form the basis of the Union Scheme and those which are recognised as belonging to tradition. The former we speak of as the Quadrilateral of Lambeth, the latter may be referred to as the Quadrilateral of Tradition. The first is comprised of the Holy Scriptures, the two Creeds, the two Sacraments and Episcopacy. As to the second we may quote from the article 'Tradition' in the E.R.E. 'In the great or "Melkite" Church, as it was called, as it stood on the eve of the great schism of 1054 the fourfold structure of traditionalism had come into full explicit and conscious existence. The Church, the hierarchy, the canon of scripture and the Ecumenical Councils are all there.' It will be seen then that there is a close parallel between the two Quadrilaterals, and the possibility that in accepting the one we are thereby committing ourselves to a definite attitude toward the other is not one that can be lightly set aside, if only for the reason that the subject of tradition and its authority was one of the most important around which the controversies of the Reformation, waged.

There are those who would urge that, inasmuch as in the early centuries of the Church its leaders were nearer to the origin of its history, their decisions must have a greater weight of authority than is possible to us who now stand historically so far from its source. Tradition is that which has been 'handed down' orally. Our Lord promised His Holy Spirit to teach His followers to guide them into all the truth and this subsequent teaching, handed down as tradition, bears with it, it is declared, an authority equal to that of Scripture itself. It has a binding force not for that

time only but for all time. The question, of course, as to what might be accepted as tradition, had to be faced, and the principle was arrived at that 'that which was accepted', to quote St. Vincent of Lerins' phrase, *ubique, semper, ab omnibus* had final authority which could not be gainsaid. '*Securus judicat orbis terrarum*'. Such a tradition, such a deposit of truth, was to be found in the decisions of Ecumenical Councils, as for example, the creeds. But a deposit requires a depositary, an institution, and within that institution a class, which by its very constitution should be a guarantee of the validity of the deposit. That institution was the Church, the Body of Christ, and that class was to be found in the bishops, who by unbroken and tactual succession from Christ and His apostles would, it was claimed, speak with authority as being the Church's mouthpiece. Hence the Church and the hierarchy. Nor could the scriptures be altogether separated from tradition, inasmuch as the Canon of Scripture was necessarily based upon the Church's decision as to what writings should and what should not form such a Canon. Hence the four 'notes' of Tradition.

Scripture itself, however, as distinct from the Canon of Scripture, was considered to be other than Tradition. It is true that Tradition, originally oral, might come to be written down. 'It is written down in detail by Origen and less explicitly by Irenaeus'.¹ But it was *ἀλγφαρος* in the sense of 'not Scripture' as distinct from *ἀγραφή*, that which was written by Christ's apostles or those in close companionship with them. Further, there could still be a purely oral tradition alongside that which came to be written. Innocent I dealing with the case of Pelagius could refer to a 'secret treasury' of divine truth which apparently rendered the Roman Pontiff an oracle from which other bishops must receive decisions as certainly divine; and again, the tendency to concentrate the guarantee for such tradition in a single class developed into the tendency to concentrate the functions of that depositary class in a single chief depositary or supreme pontiff, until we get the claim of Pius IX, 'I am tradition'.

This extended but rough outline has been necessary to bring us sharply up against the implications of an unquestioning acceptance of the 'traditional' spirit. There is no member in any of the uniting churches who would hold himself to a 'secret treasury' or to the claim of the Pope that he is himself tradition. But that does not settle the question. It is true that there seems to be in human nature two opposed types, the conservative and the liberal, the institutional and the individual, the Catholic and the Protestant (in the more popular use of these terms), the one who looks for some infallible authority, and the one who would 'work out his own salvation with fear and trembling'. But that distinction is never clear cut. There is something of the traditional in all of us, we all look for some

¹ Gore, *Reconstruction of Belief*, p. 873.

authority, and when we have found it, tend to give an obedience to it that questions no further. Or again, if we begin with reverence for our own religious intuitions, we cannot withhold reverence from those of the Christian society and still less from the intuitions of the spiritual aristocracy of the prophets and apostles. To the question, 'May not every man think what he likes?' it is a fair answer to say that 'what he likes' is not the result of his own personal thinking and desires alone. No individual experience is a purely individual phenomenon; it is the experience of those who have lived before us as well as those among whom we live and work, built up into the structure of our own being. To a great deal of the rejection of religious tradition and doctrine today it is relevant to reply, 'Art thou the first man that was born?'

Tradition then must have its place, and it has—with the Protestant as with the Catholic—though the meaning given to it by each may not be quite the same. But it has its place, and should have its authority. It is only when an unquestionable, infallible authority is claimed for it that men may rightly hold back. For tradition in the last resort is based on individual experience, and its authority has only weight in so far as it develops individual experience based on a proving test and a reasoned examination of its credentials. Authority at its best is intended to educate its subject into independence of its help and restraint. It is to serve as a guide, an inspiration, a counsellor, a friend. Its function is to stimulate enquiry, not suppress it. The spirit of Christ was to lead His followers into all the truth, but the truth was to make them free. If infallibility is to be found anywhere, should we not all agree that it is to be found in the Master? Yet He was exceedingly reserved in the method of His teaching. He did indeed ask for whole-hearted self-devotion and faith in Himself and His word. But for the rest He plainly meant His disciples to learn for themselves from their experience of Him and to catch the truth from hints and parables. How very rarely He gave a direct answer! How very often He forced men to think for themselves! Such a question as 'Who is my neighbour?'—an excellent example of the questions decided by rabbinical authorities—is answered in the end by the questioner himself. 'Why judge ye not of yourselves what is right?' It is true that such are men's limitations we must needs rest upon authority. The majority of us have to accept the statements of science, chemistry, biology, geology, astronomy. There is another realm, however, where we cannot do this. They tell us that friendship is beautiful. Is that so? We can never know until we enter each man for himself. There are no proxies for the soul. The one vital thing in religion is first hand personal experience. 'Now we believe, not because of thy speaking, for we have heard *for ourselves and know*.'

Individual experience is fundamental, but the principle underlying tradition is necessary also. We need an objective standard to enable us to decide between the competing claims of those who profess to be equally

illuminated by the Holy Spirit. Such an objective standard saves the individual from too hasty a judgement, from presumption. It stands as a corrective, a guide, an inspiration. Both must have their place. The religion of authority and the religion of personal experience may easily become a misleading antithesis. Experience and authority are not in themselves contradictory terms.

What then is the danger? It is two-fold. On the one hand, that a man by his independence should be 'blown about by every wind of doctrine'. On the other hand, that a man having authority, especially an authority that may be taken to have divine sanction, may use that authority purely as such—because it is the easy way, the short cut. There seems to be a constant, inherent tendency in man to fall back on authority and to accept it. It saves him from the struggle of thinking for himself, from venturing for himself his faith. This tendency is equally to be found with the Protestant as with the Catholic. For example, in an account of Pastor Robinson's last sermon before the little company of pioneers left Leyden we read that 'Robinson took occasion also miserably to bewail the state and condition of the Reformed Churches who were come to a period in Religion and would go no further than the instruments of their Reformation. As for example, the Lutherans, they could not be drawn to go beyond what Luther saw, for whatever part of God's will he had further imparted to Calvin they will die rather than embrace it. And so also, saith he, you see the Calvinists, they stick where he left them; a misery much to be lamented. For though they were precious shining lights in their times, yet God hath not revealed his whole will to them.' As for John Robinson himself he was 'looking for more truth and light yet to break forth out of His Holy Word.'

Does then this Scheme of Union which is before us help us here? It is surely a fundamental question. If there is no answer to it, then it may well be that we should remain as we are. Let us take the following points in the Scheme and consider them: the Scriptures, the Sacraments, the Creeds, and Episcopacy.

(a) In the history of the Church we see clearly the effect of tradition; that is to say, authority based on a preconceived divine basis, asserting itself by direct exercise of its power on the one hand, and on the other the apparently universal instinct in man to rely on some external authority as an infallible guide; an authoritative, traditional Church asserting that the eminence and efficiency and infallibility of the Scriptures is due to the method of their composition: Spiritu Sancto Dictante; and later still in the encyclical on 'the study of Holy Scripture' issued by Pope Leo XIII in 1893, where it is said 'God is declared to be the *Author* of everything in the authentic text of the Bible, not only statements affecting faith and morals, but statements on every subject'. But the same instinct for an infallible external

authority shows itself in Protestantism. After the freshness and initial force of the Reformation had spent itself against the Roman attack, the Lutheran and Reformed Churches were drawn to seek an infallible authority to pit against an infallible Church; they took the step of asserting an infallible Scripture; The Helvetic Consensus Formula of 1675 declared that even Hebrew points in the text of the Old Testament were inspired.

But while in Protestantism there has been a strong element which has believed in the verbal inspiration of the Bible, in the interpretation of its teaching there has been beyond question many and confusing methods. We have abundant evidence to prove that the private interpretation of the Bible becomes the source of strange perverted doctrines based on misunderstood texts isolated from the general context. The words of Hooker written over 300 years ago seem hardly inappropriate, 'When they and their Bibles were alone together, what strange fantastical opinion soever at any time entered their head, their use was to think the spirit taught them'. A glance at the Index to the 'World Atlas of Foreign Missions' (amazing proof though it is to the wonderful power of our Lord to claim the utmost in service from those who would name His Name), is sufficient evidence of this individual interpretation. But one is bound to ask what the newly baptized Hindu of any intelligence is to make of it all? He comes from a religion whose followers believe their own Scriptures to be divinely dictated, as does the Mohammedan; it is *Śruti*. He believes also that he is to accept *Smṛiti*, 'what was remembered' tradition, as also to be observed. What is he to make of the bewildering difference of views with which he is faced when he enters the Church, with regard to the Bible? The united Church faces this difficulty in two ways. 'It accepts the Holy Scriptures of Old and New Testaments as containing all things necessary to salvation and as the ultimate standard of faith.' The Bible is the basis by which everything is to be tested. It safeguards a false stress upon anything else. It is to be in the fullest sense a Book open to all. In order, however, that guidance may be given in reading it, provision is made whereby some unity in understanding it may be achieved. The Church, through the Bishops as its representatives, can direct the thoughts of its members in their reading of the Bible so that they may tend to come to a common mind upon essentials and a right emphasis where required. 'Understandest thou what thou readest?', 'How can I, except some one shall guide me?'

(b) In the Sacraments also we see, in the history of the Church, traditional authority having its influence. Some views of baptismal regeneration and the doctrine that in the Eucharist effective grace is obtained '*ex opere operato*' are indications of the trend towards a view of the sacraments which emphasise the infallible nature of their working, independent of the recipient's attitude or the minister's worthiness. Now it would be possible to refer to tradition itself to show how at variance it is with itself. As for instance when Rome, represented by its bishop Stephen, affirmed the vali-

dity of baptism administered by heretics. As again, when we find that those who give weight to the traditional view are agreed that 'there is nothing in the New Testament which gives any indication as to who or who might not preside at the Eucharist'. And, again, as to the administration of the sacraments, down to the time of Tertullian the laity and their ministers were alike regarded as priests. So that in the absence of clergy, a layman could present the Eucharist offerings; he could 'exercise the rights of a priest in cases of necessity.' But in the Scheme itself are we not safeguarded from the extreme ritualistic view? The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is to be known as Holy Communion, rather than the Eucharist or the Mass; there is to be allowed some considerable variety in the service; both with regard to Baptism and Communion it is asserted that while these are believed to be Christ's plain command, yet 'the mercy of God to all mankind cannot be limited'. It is true that 'Presbyters and bishops alone have the right to celebrate the Holy Communion', and while there might be some of us who would like to leave the way open in exceptional cases, as for example by special license, for laymen to officiate, a practice which has been found on occasion to be of great help, yet the whole attitude to the sacrament as expressed in the Scheme, and the definite assertion that these things are 'made effective by faith', emphasise that the limitation in administration is one based on purposes of 'due order' rather than on any traditional and sacerdotal claims.

(c) The Creeds were in some ways more particularly the work of the General Councils than anything else. They became standards by which the Christian might guide and control his thought. The danger was that in becoming accepted by the universal Church they received an undue authority and an influence which tended to forget the purposes for which they were made. As early as the beginning of the third Century Tertullian could speak of the creedal standard of the day as 'a rule of faith, changeless and incapable of reformation'. Being required to be accepted as necessary for admission to membership, they tended to be accepted as a sufficient condition. Faith, instead of being trust, came to be a particular belief in doctrine. But their origin was otherwise. 'Men often speak of the dogmas of the Church as if they were deliberate attempts to impose certain arbitrary interpretations upon the truth contained in Scripture. The fact is just the opposite: they are the results of attempts to protect the historic record of the Gospel from arbitrary interpretations suggested by current modes of thought'. Pagan philosophies were active and converts entered the Church carrying with them many pre-Christian and Pagan ideas. All that the Creeds sought to do, then, was to guide the thoughts of new members against false notions of Christ, to serve as a framework within which the truth of Christian thought must lie. They marked out 'the right channel by warning Christians off perilous shoals and currents'. They gave the Christians their 'point of view' in listening to and reading the Bible. Is

not that just what is required in India today? Are we to repeat the dangers of Gnosticism again in the form of Theosophy? Should we not emphasise the historic fact of Jesus in a country where history has not been stressed? Is it not well in this way to bring home the fact of the Incarnation over against the doctrine of 'avatars'?

But they are not all that are required, and the Scheme recognises this, lest in a country where religious tradition is so much emphasised, they receive an unquestioning, unreasoning exclusive sanction which they were not originally intended to have. Other confessions previously in use may be employed. The united Church may issue supplementary statements. Would it not, for example, be well, if, in a land of caste, there were recited in the service, equally with one or other of the creeds, the two 'Great Commandments' of our Lord? Or, again, may it not be found advisable to draw up a creed which, just as the two that have been accepted were framed having in mind the philosophies of their time, shall be more suitable to the philosophy of Hinduism? Or, again, may it not prove well that in a land where the Absolute is thought of as without or beyond qualities, we should remember by some creed that whereas the creeds of early Christendom conceived God mainly in terms of metaphysical essence, our Lord conceived of Him in terms of moral attributes?

(d) *Episcopacy*.—If what has been said so far is accepted, if, that is to say, it is recognised that it is sought in the Scheme to bring together not merely the Episcopalian with the non-Episcopalian, if the union proposed is one which seeks to harmonise what seem apparently to be two tendencies in human nature which are constantly tending to set themselves in opposition to each other, the conservative and the liberal, the institutional and the individual, the traditional and the independent, then in the fourth of the points we have taken for consideration—Episcopacy—we may begin to see the difficulty in its true setting. The difficulty is not fundamentally a question of order, or of the regularity or irregularity of a particular ministry; but one of which these are but secondary, however important they may be considered to be. The question really at issue is whether the Scheme does allow for the two contending traits of which we have been speaking. Now, no one can rightly or safely ignore tradition; such a claim for liberty tends in the end to confusion and licence. But when tradition becomes crystallised, losing that life force which gave it whatever authority it had, it tends to take to itself an authority on claims which it did not in its origin assert. The difficulty is how to combine with the principle of historic continuity of faith and life a powerful principle of movement and progress. Does the Scheme do this?

Now, the claims of episcopacy, that it has divine sanction, that in the providence of God it was fore-ordained as an essential part of the Church, that it is of the very 'esse' of the Church and not merely the 'bene esse'.

these things are not beyond dispute. It is possible to quote with episcopalian authority such statements as 'It is an obscure matter exactly how the Church constituted as Ignatius describes it (i.e. the threefold ministry) developed out of the constitution of the Church as it appears in the Acts of the Apostles', and 'Nothing seems to be more certain than that the New Testament gives no decisive indication of the precise form the ministry was to take'. It is possible to argue 'about it and about' what Clement of Rome at the end of the First Century meant when he referred to 'other distinguished men' appointing those who were 'approved' to succeed to the Apostles, or to the case of Alexandrian presbyters claiming to consecrate their own bishops. Such discussions only centre round one aspect of this continuing conflict in human nature and history between the traditional and the independent. It would seem that we have to give a place to both, for both are maintained on grounds of conscience; both it would seem inherent in our nature, and indeed in the same man at different times. All that can be asked is that each should be free to hold his own view and not be asked to press his claims as a 'sine qua non' upon the other. That involves, of course, that the united Church should not either by statement of belief assert the one over against the other or by any part of its organization imply the one as against the other. Hence the discussion as to the part presbyters may or must have in the consecration of bishops. There are those who feel that, as it is in the Scheme at present, it appears to be unimportant whether presbyters take part or not; they may or may not; it appears to be immaterial, and so objection is taken. But what is it that ministers, for example of the Congregational Churches, really understand by their ministry? They believe in the equal priesthood of all believers. Is it not that which is fundamental to their belief? And therefore in theory, whatever the practice, a man, whether by his office he be called overseer or bishop, minister or layman, is still a 'priest'. Only, as there are differences of gifts between individuals, so in an organisation there are differences of function, of office. We are all priests, but we are not all official priests. The church may rightly appoint such, if it deem wise; it may appoint overseers or bishops, if it think well so to do. But to appoint or consecrate a bishop as is suggested in the Telugu Council, *at this juncture and with the purpose they have in mind*, is to lend force to criticism, that if it be done while still they are 'Congregationalists', they are tending to belie that very principle of the universal priesthood, the equality of all members, which so tenaciously and so finely they have maintained, the very element that is sought to be brought over into the united Church. To appoint or consecrate a bishop, however, in the act of uniting, is a different matter. Here, initially, the presbyter rightly and necessarily takes part. Let this at any rate be clear. Not merely as it says in the Scheme, that Presbyters 'should' with the possibility of implication that they do so by permission rather than of right, but that they 'shall', so that the act of consecration shall clearly be an act which all three sections of the uniting Church are performing.

But when this principle has been maintained in the act of uniting, non-episcopal Churches have still another principle to maintain in the united Church. In the act of uniting, recognition is being given to the historic episcopate—the traditional side. In the united Church the point of view of the non-traditional is to be maintained, and it is suggested that for this purpose presbyters shall always take part in all future consecrations. But this lends itself to the objection that in so doing, and in view of historical associations and traditions they are tending to perpetuate the difference between presbyter and bishop. Why must presbyters take part? For the very reason that bishops have been regarded as different from them. But by continually stressing that difference are we not in danger of continuing to emphasise it and so perpetuate it? And make tradition more traditional still? That is not what is sought. From the point of view of presbyterian and congregational elements what is desired is that it shall be possible still to regard bishops as presbyters and nothing more, though they differ in function, that when bishops consecrate bishops yet still it may be believed that they are presbyters setting apart presbyters to particular specified duties, and that therefore, as bishops are presbyters, it is not always essential that presbyters as distinct from bishops should take part. Now, this view is not necessarily maintained by the wording as it is in the Scheme. That presbyters may or may not take part is open to the original objection that their presence is only permissive. Is it possible to strengthen the phrase? If it were stated that presbyters 'shall of right if Diocesan Councils so desire' take part in consecration, would it not acknowledge all that is claimed by them, and they would be showing by their very choice from time to time in not deciding to take part that the bishops who act for them are doing so as their representatives and as representatives of the Church?

But while in this way the non-episcopal Churches may safeguard their tradition, there is a tradition of the historic episcopate which all sections of the uniting Churches should have, if it is to be of real value and not merely something accepted for the sake of an outward union.

Three or four things may be suggested for consideration :—

(a) It is *historic*. In India, as has often been said, though perhaps with some degree of overemphasis, history has no place. At any rate, by the very nature of the philosophy of Hinduism, it cannot convey the same meaning, or have the same importance as we conceive it. As then, we maintain the historical facts of Christ's birth and life and death and resurrection, so then by maintaining the historic fact unbroken through the centuries of the continuance of that Life in His Church, which is His Body, a continuance of which in some measure the episcopate is an outward and visible sign, we are stressing an aspect of which the Indian Church is to avail itself, if India is fully to know all that Christ has meant to the world.

(b) And, secondly, it is an episcopate, an overseership. It is of the tradition of Hinduism to reverence the guru, one who is not merely teacher, but guide, counsellor, and friend in all the things of life. That there should be in the Indian Church such gurus, permanent, and not subject to constant changes in station, recognised and acknowledged by all, cannot but appeal to the Indian mind.

(c) Then, thirdly, he stands as an acknowledged representative to the Church of Christ in all the world. A visible society which, because it is to be diffused throughout the world, lacks all the links of fellowship which belong to a nation, must have links of its own. The Bishop stands as a representative of the Church of that internationalism or supra-nationalism which has always been in theory at any rate a mark of the Christian Church. Do we not need to emphasise this by every means in our power, especially if we pride ourselves on our Protestantism? We Protestants ought to feel a special responsibility for this nationalism that at the present time so takes the place of God. We Protestants began our battle for spiritual liberty against the tyranny of Rome, and as one of the most potent agencies in the winning of our battle we helped to develop the spirit of nationality. Luther did more than write spiritual treatises, he sent out ringing, patriotic appeals to the German nobility against Rome. 'Protestantism, without ever intending it, as an unexpected by-product of its fight for spiritual liberty, helped to break up Western Europe into nations, where nationalism absorbed the loyalty of the people.' How are we to counterbalance that nationalism save by a united Church which transcends such a spirit? We are to save the Christian Church in India from becoming a purely 'national' Church.

(d) On the Bishop will rest, as has been the case wherever the historic episcopate has been in force, great responsibility for building the different sections of the Church into one. As for example, in worship. That will be no light task.

When St. Augustine of Canterbury, troubled at the discovery that the British and Gallican uses both differed from that of Rome, wrote for advice, Gregory the Great laid down this as a sound foundation principle :

'You, my brother, are acquainted with the customs of the Roman Church, in which you have been brought up. But it is my pleasure that if you have found anything either in the Roman or the Gallican or any other Church, which may be more acceptable to Almighty God, you carefully make choice of the same, and sedulously teach the Church of the Angels, which is at present new in the Faith, whatsoever you can gather from the several Churches. For things are not to be loved for the sake of places, but places for the sake of good things. Select therefore from each Church those things that are pious, religious and correct, and when you have made

these up into one body, instil this into the minds of the English for their use.'

Dr. Pusey in 1849 wrote :

'Certainly one should be glad that greater reverence could be restored, but I have long felt that we must first win the hearts of the people, and then the fruits of reverence will show themselves. To begin with outward things seems like gathering flowers and putting them in the earth to grow.'

Who shall be sufficient for all this? Only he who with God's grace has also the loyalty and prayers of his people.

It was an extremely distinguished representative of the Episcopate, who, according to Lord Acton ['The Vatican Council' in *N.B. Review*, liii (1871), 208] said at the beginning of the Vatican Council :

'We bishops are absorbed in work and are not scholars. We sadly need the help of those that are. It is to be hoped that the Council will raise only such questions as can be dealt with competently by practical experience and common sense.'

'If you love me, condole with me,' wrote Gregory the Great, 'because my worldly business is so exacting that my promotion to the Episcopate almost means separation from God.'

No, it will be no easy task. It has taken years to obtain a Scheme. It will take generations even after the Scheme be put into force, to obtain Union. Will it ever be? Can two such contending, opposing, persisting principles in human nature not merely be found at work alongside each other but become fused into one?

Do you know that lovely fact about the opal? That in the first place it is made of desert dust, of sand, and that it owes its beauty and preciousness to a defect? It is a stone with a broken heart. It is full of minute fissures which admit air and the air reflects light. Hence its lovely hues and that lamp of fire that ever burns at its heart, for the breath of the Lord God is in it. We too are made of the dust of the earth, in us too there are our defects, our divisions, our fissures, but there are some of us who believe that the breath of the Lord God is being breathed through us, so that we may be made into one, and reflect His beauty, 'the glory as of the only begotten Son of God, full of grace and truth'.

KOTAGIRI,

M. B. TAYLOR.

December, 1933.

The Privileges and Duties of Laymen in the United Church

The spread of Christianity throughout the world has been effected chiefly by the members of the community telling the good news to their fellows. Men and women of all classes of society were the heralds of the Gospel. Organisation became necessary when the converts came together for worship and fellowship. Overseers were appointed and set apart and men and women took part in the work of the Church. In all ages laymen have been associated with ordained ministers in the work of the Church.

In South India in the three Churches that are planning to come together laymen (including women) are employed in various ways, though there is nothing like uniformity in practice. In India most churches have men and women employed wholly as catechists, evangelists, readers, Bible-women, who are paid for their services by the churches or missions. These will not be considered in this paper, though the status and work of these men and women will have to be considered in the united Church, as they are a very valuable class of workers. This paper will deal with the voluntary work of men and women in the united Church.

In many a small unorganised church, where there is no resident pastor or catechist, the work of the church is carried on by the members themselves. The worship is led by one or more of them; they help one another in various ways. They have an occasional visit from a pastor or evangelist, but they have to help themselves.

When the church is organised, a place and work should be found for every member, if the life of that church is to be vigorous and progressive. The danger is that when a pastor or catechist is appointed to a church, many think that, as he is paid for his services, he must do all the work. Instead of each lending a helping hand the possibility is that criticism and fault-finding take the place of help. The sooner each little group of Christians is organised so that each may have something to do in the church, the better it will be for the life and health of that church.

The work or duties of the members may be roughly divided into two kinds—the more directly spiritual and the financial and social.

The spiritual work again may be divided into two—the teaching or preaching and the pastoral. In the three Churches there are persons who more or less regularly conduct services and teach the congregation. In the Church of India there are those licensed by the bishop to conduct services. In the South India United Church there are men who occasionally lead the worship of the congregation and preach. In the Methodist Church there is an organisation of lay preachers, usually called 'local preachers', as they remain in the locality doing their ordinary work, in contrast to the ordained preacher, who may be transferred from one place to another.

It would be impossible to have regular services in many Methodist congregations without these preachers. In Britain more services are conducted every Sunday in Methodist Churches by laymen than by ordained ministers. Here in India this is not the case at present, but if congregations are formed in the villages, it will be necessary to have such a body. It may be interesting to know how these lay preachers are organised.

Every minister is on the look out for helpers in his work and for the extension of it. When he finds a young man, who has experience of the grace of God and has an intelligent grasp of the plan of salvation, he encourages him to take part in Sunday school work, in prayer meetings and other kinds of worship. If the young man has the gift of utterance, he is encouraged to speak in the Sunday school, the Wesley Guild, and other meetings. He is urged to study the Bible, and he is asked to take part in public worship. If he manifests gifts, he is appointed to take a service in a cottage or in a small church. He may at first be accompanied by an older local preacher, who will be able to report on the work of the young man. If there is promise, the person is received as a local preacher on trial, a course of reading is appointed, and at the end of twelve months he is examined orally in the local preachers' meeting. This is a meeting held once a quarter when the local preachers are met by the minister and their work is carefully considered. Certain subjects relating to the local preachers of that area and to the services of the church are considered and dealt with. The local preachers in Methodism are a distinct body with a discipline of their own to be observed. Without them Methodism could not hold its own and make progress. One duty of the united Church will be to devise methods by which those who have the gift of preaching shall exercise it.

Then the voluntary pastoral work of laymen has to be considered. In Congregational Churches there are Deacons; in Presbyterian Churches there are Elders; in Methodist Churches there are Class Leaders. I am not aware that there is a body of laymen in the Church of India that exactly corresponds to these workers. In all three Churches the duty of these men is to help the minister in looking after the flock. In the Presbyterian section the elders are assigned a number of families, or a village or group of villages, and these he is expected to visit. In the Congregational section the deacons help the minister in pastoral work and church discipline. The elder in the Presbyterian Church and the deacon in the Congregational Church assist the minister in the distribution of the elements when the Holy Communion is celebrated, but in the Methodist Church the layman does not take part. In the Methodist Church the layman that assists the minister is called a Leader, and a certain number of church members is allotted to each leader, who is required to meet them once a week in a meeting called the 'class meeting', where the members help one another by prayer, study of God's Word, and by practical experience; or to visit them in their homes.

In these three Churches there is a body, called by different names, consisting of these lay pastors and others, where matters of church discipline are considered and settled, if possible; where persons are examined for church membership, and where all matters affecting the spiritual affairs of the church are considered and dealt with. In the Church of India these questions are left largely to the minister, though in very many cases there are pastorate committees, which have similar functions. It ought not to be difficult in the united Church to unify work of this kind and make it effective in aiding the pastor in his work. In the Presbyterian Church the elders are ordained; in the Methodist Church there is a special service in which the local preacher, when he has passed his probation, and the leader are set apart for their work. No special provision is made for training men and women for this work.

To turn now to the financial and social work in which laymen are required to take part, each of the uniting Churches has its lay workers. The Church of India has its trustees and sidesmen, the Presbyterians have deacons that deal with the temporalities of the church; the Congregationalists have deacons that attend to finance; the Methodists have stewards, who look after property, finance, and the poor. There is probably no uniform practice in any Church regarding the way the support of the ministry and the work of the church is obtained. Collections are made in all churches, offerings are made by the members in various ways. Different methods are employed in different churches. These moneys are held by the officers appointed to receive them, whether trustees, or elders, or deacons, or stewards. It may be possible in the united Church to have a uniform nomenclature, for the work must be very much the same in each church. In the Methodist Church there is a special steward for the poor. He receives the contributions for the poor, and gives them to the minister, who is usually the almoner of the church. After union the whole Church will have a variety of practice to examine and to select the most helpful, though it will not be possible at first to devise a financial scheme that will suit all the Churches.

The Indian is very willing to take part in church work, and often magnifies his office when he is appointed to one. The work of each church worker (I do not like the word official) should be defined as clearly as possible, and all should work in hearty and full co-operation with the minister. In the united Church place and work should be found for every one able and willing to work.

There are in most churches, in addition to the ordinary worship of the church, Sunday schools, special meetings for young people, such as Christian Endeavour Societies, Wesley Guilds, and similar meetings, where voluntary workers are needed. Similarly there are meetings for women where the more intelligent can help their less favoured sisters. The lay preachers should be formed into an evangelistic band to help the minister and the evangelist in open-air services in the streets of the town or in the villages. Music

has great attractions for the Indian, and in many churches there are *bhajan*s, or bands of players on Indian musical instruments, who also sing lyrics. Such a band, when under the control of the local church court, may be of great service, but musicians all the world over are not the easiest to work under discipline.

If the work of the laymen is to be conserved and extended, there must be regular meetings where their work is reviewed and plans made to extend and develop it. The Scheme provides for the formation of a Pastorate Committee, but wisely does not attempt to go into much detail. In some churches there are monthly meetings, in others quarterly meetings for the review of the work and for making plans for development. In some churches all the work of the church—whether spiritual or temporal—comes under the purview of one committee; in others two committees or courts are appointed, one to deal with the spiritual, and the other with the temporal, concerns of the church. Organisation is essential to the development of the church, but too complicated an organisation may defeat its own purpose. There must be elasticity to allow of the working of the Holy Spirit and to encourage initiative in the members in their work for the church.

Little has been said about the minister in this paper. It is understood that he presides at all meetings, is in close touch with all departments of work in his church, and holds himself ready to advise and assist every good work that aims at the growth of the church members in grace and the conversion of those outside.

Looking at the Scheme of Union as a whole, at the great variety of work which laymen can share in, the number of earnest and educated men and women in the three churches, union will bring together such a variety and quantity of work and workers, that the Church of South India will be greatly enriched and fully equipped to face the task before it of bringing the Gospel of Jesus Christ to their fellows in South India and inducing them to accept Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.

H. GULLIFORD.

Assistant Bishops

The question of the appointment of Assistant Bishops in the United Church raises many difficulties and problems. As early as 1873 it was decided by a conference of Bishops not to introduce into India the system of Suffragan or Assistant Bishops. Such Bishops, the conference felt, would be without that freedom and independence of position which is essential to the due exercise of their office. Their position of mere assistants acting in entire subordination to the Bishop whom they assist, and only so long as he pleases, would render them in public estimation an inferior class of Bishops. In 1922 the Episcopal Synod of India reaffirmed the policy of 1873, adding however that 'in some places it might be advisable to appoint

Assistant Bishops as a temporary expedient or as a step intended to prepare the way for a division of a diocese'. These two are the only conditions under which the appointment of an Assistant Bishop is allowed under the Constitution of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon. 'The policy of the Bishops in 1873', says Dr. Palmer,¹ 'saved the Church from a danger which they may have foreseen. If the opposite policy had been adopted, there would have been a considerable temptation to appoint Indian Bishops as assistants. . . . At the same time the policy drove the authorities of the Church to find ways of dividing the dioceses, whatever the difficulties might be.'

It is necessary to examine the decision of the Bishops in 1873. It arose upon a proposal that two Assistant Bishops should be appointed under the Bishop of Madras, one to supervise the S.P.G. Missions in Tinnevely and the other to supervise the C.M.S. Missions in that district. Soon after this decision two such Assistant Bishops were appointed for a time. It did tend to widen the breach between 'the S.P.G. Christians' and 'the C.M.S. Christians'. The mistake here was the appointing of two Bishops to the different sections of the Anglican Church. Apart from this, it may be confidently stated, that the two Bishops were held in great estimation and were never taken by the people of Tinnevely as an inferior class of Bishops. Bishop Caldwell and Bishop Sargeant are household names in Tinnevely and every one remembers them with great honour and intense affection. Moreover conditions in India are quite different today from what they were in 1873.

In England since 1870 a number of Suffragan Bishops have been consecrated to assist in the larger dioceses. The Suffragan takes his title from a town within the diocese in which he works and holds a commission from the Bishop which requires renewal when a new diocesan is appointed. He is generally given some definite work for which he is responsible. There is also close relationship and frequent communication between the Diocesan and his Suffragan. On the whole it is affirmed the system works most satisfactorily in spite of the fact a Suffragan's title depends upon the Bishop who has granted it and that he has no seat in the Convocation.

In the United States of America, at first only Assistant Bishops with the right of succession were appointed. Later on it was found necessary to modify this convention and every great diocese has had its Assistant Bishops who have rendered immensely valuable service little troubled by the discussion of their status.

In the future South Indian Church, each diocese as at present contemplated is bound to be very large. For a long time to come it will not be wise to increase the number of dioceses, for the different strands in each diocese must have time to be welded together and to grow into one organic

¹ In *Episcopacy, Ancient and Modern*. S.P.C.K. To the same book I am indebted for the information in the succeeding three paragraphs.

unity and multiplication of dioceses in the interests of local autonomy will hinder this growth. It cannot be denied that in every one of these large dioceses administrative difficulties will be almost superhuman. Apart from the perennial race problem, there will be the problem of Church traditions and doctrines. It will be physically impossible for the Bishop of the diocese to look to all the details and to be in close touch with the members of his flock.

On the other hand, as we have seen, it is essential that nothing should be done to impair the unity of the diocese. Every facility should be given for the evolution of a distinctive regional Church in South India with its special inheritance and characteristics which will go to enrich the one holy Catholic Church. Union with other Churches which will be still outside must also be considered.

Taking all these into consideration there is much to be said for the appointment of Assistant Bishops in the United Church, who will share with the Bishop of the Diocese the work of guiding the Church and thus relieve the strain on a single individual.

It may be argued that a Bishop, because he is a bishop, should have every privilege (as far as his office is concerned) which belongs to any member of his order; and that Assistant Bishops will become an intermediate order between the Diocesan Bishops and the Priests, with no jurisdiction, and consequently lose in prestige and dignity. These are very serious objections. But a large amount of work which will fall to the lot of a Diocesan will not be strictly episcopal or matters connected with faith and order. As far as episcopal functions are concerned, an Assistant Bishop will have co-ordinate powers. From the experience of the past in Tinnevely, where two Assistant Bishops worked side by side without any loss of prestige or dignity, there need be no fear on this score. Dignity and prestige go with the person rather than with the office. And if an Assistant Bishop is given some definite work for which he is responsible and in which he has full scope for initiative, he will not be considered as of an inferior order.

With due care to safeguard the unity of the diocese and 'the spiritual' equality of all bishops, the system of Assistant Bishops will work admirably to the greater efficiency of the United Church. For, two or three bishops acting together in the centre will give a richer unity and harmony to the diocese than that given by a single individual. With a number of Assistant Bishops, it will be possible to give room for different shades of churchmanship to be represented in the Episcopate also, which will be a necessity in order to make the United Church a real home for a person holding advanced Anglo-Catholic views as well as for one holding extreme Protestant ideas. It may be said at once that there need not be any fear that Indians will always be Assistant Bishops; but we cannot deny the fact that there will be certain Bishoprics full of military chaplaincies for which an Englishman

will be necessary, because no Indian can enter into the background of the military officer or British soldier any more than an English missionary can ever be a really effective pastor in an Indian village. An Assistant Bishop in such cases will help to solve the problem. Again, often we come across very devout men of sound scholarship who find the routine of administration attached to the Diocesan unattractive; these godly men as Assistant Bishops will have greater freedom and more facilities to come in intimate spiritual contact with the people and to help the clergy on with the sympathy, guidance and leadership which they long for, and which must be a Bishop's first and foremost work; for above all to an Indian Christian a Bishop is his Father-in-God or *Guru*.

Finally, to turn once more to Tinnevely, almost every one belonging to the district cherishes the memory of one or other of the two Assistant Bishops and repeats with affection some incident in which oneself or one's parent or grand-parent and one of the bishops were concerned. While diocesan Bishops are only names to a majority of the people, these two Assistant Bishops had woven themselves intimately into the fabric of hundreds of families in Tinnevely. It is because these two bishops were in charge of small areas, and divested of the routine Diocesan administrative work, that they had plenty of leisure and freedom to move in intimate terms with the members of their flock and know them by name.

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